

EGYPTIANS STAY STRONG

By Fred Goldstein

Feb. 8 — Hosni Mubarak's military-police regime and its creators in Washington are waging a war of attrition to wear down the newly emerging Egyptian revolution. But the people show no signs of backing down. More than a million anti-government demonstrators today once again filled Liberation Square.

Despite police-agent attacks, gradual escalation of pressure from the military and slanderous campaigns against the protesters on Egyptian state television, all reports are that masses of people have flooded into central Cairo to demand the immediate ouster of Mubarak.

Press reports and live television feeds from Al Jazeera showed anti-Mubarak demonstrators streaming into Tahrir Square, swelling the crowds to at least as large a gathering as last Friday's massive "Day of Departure" demonstration.

People show no signs of backing down

The masses came out in a renewed show of force, ignoring vague promises of "reform" from newly appointed Vice President Omar Suleiman, the former head of the secret police and a notorious torturer. According to the Wall Street Journal of Feb. 8, "Demonstrators showed no signs of backing down or losing support Tuesday. The lines to get into the square snaked down the street running along the Nile as well as across the Kasr Al Nil Bridge, as sympathizers heeded the call for another show of strength. New arrivals waited patiently shoulder to shoulder to get in. Ahead of them, the square was already packed with a crowd easily as large as the one that gathered Friday."

A crowd of tens of thousands also
Continued on page 8

Egypt becomes more ungovernable as workers strike

As WW goes to press on Feb. 9, it is reported that growing numbers of Egyptian workers have gone out on strike all over the country as the struggle to oust the despised, U.S.-backed Mubarak regime intensifies. Among the many taking to the

streets are: workers from the Ministry of Health near Tahrir Square; 6,000 workers at five service companies owned by the Suez Canal Authority, who organized a sit-down; 2,000 textile workers; more than 1,500 striking workers at a factory in Ma-

halla, who blocked roads; more than 2,000 workers from the Sigma pharmaceutical company in Quesna; and 5,000 unemployed youth who took over a government building in Aswan, demanding the dismissal of the governor.



WEEK 3 — CROWDS IN TAHRIR SQUARE KEEP GROWING



Man holds empty cartridges on his fingers fired a day earlier by Mubarak forces.

Tahrir Square, Cairo, Egypt, Feb. 8.



Ayman Noofal (center), a prominent military commander of Hamas, is greeted by supporters upon his arrival in Gaza on Feb. 5. Noofal managed to escape from an Egyptian prison during the popular uprising.

PHOTOS: XINHUA



Protesters have breakfast in tents at Tahrir Square Feb. 6.

SOLIDARITY WITH EGYPT

- Protests in the U.S. 6
- Around the world 7
- Heroes of Tahrir Square 8
- New stage in the struggle 9



BLACK HISTORY MEANS FIGHT BACK

- Frantz Fanon legacy
- SNCC women—
A tribute 5

PUERTO RICO

Students face arrests, rubber bullets 10

HAITI ELECTIONS

U.S. maneuvers 11

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Fascism: What it is and how to fight it

PART II

Loughner, Giffords & the ultraright

By Fred Goldstein

The following is the second in a series of articles loosely based on a talk given at a Workers World Party membership meeting on Jan. 21.

Given the inflamed political climate in Arizona and the spread of right-wing politics nationally, the ruling class had a major task trying to keep public opinion from drawing a natural connection between the attempted as-sassination of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, with its accom-panying massacre, and Sarah Palin, Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck and the rising generation of ultrarightists.

In the aftermath of the shooting, Loughner’s Internet communications were used to show that he was dis-turbed. Any connection to the political right was denied, thus exonerating the hate-mongering racists and reac-tionaries. Attention was redirected to a lone individual on the grounds that there was no connection between Loughner and any rightist organization or politician.

The real Palin-Loughner connection

However, the connection between the attempted as-sassination of an establishment politician like Giffords and the ultraright was obvious. The connection was that Loughner was actually doing what the right wing had been publicly flirting with and openly suggesting.

Sarah Palin put rifle-scope crosshairs on a map target-ing election districts, including that of Giffords. The slo-gan Palin propounded was “lock and load.” What could be clearer?

Sharron Angle, who ran against Harry Reid in Ne-vada, talked about “Second Amendment solutions” to deal with political opponents. The Second Amendment to the Constitution declares the right to bear arms.

Giffords’ opponent in the election, Jesse Kelly, invited his supporters to participate in firing off M-16 rounds at a firing range as part of his campaign. What could be clearer?

Those who claim that there was no political motiva-tion have to answer the following question: More than 500,000 people live in Tucson. Why did Loughner de-cide to assassinate Giffords?

When disturbed persons go on a shooting rampage, it is usually either random or is directed against oth-ers who they feel have aggrieved them. Loughner was recently expelled from college, rejected by the armed forces and arrested by the police. Yet no one who actu-ally impeded his life was targeted.

He did have one encounter with Giffords in 2007, when he attended one of her community meetings. Ac-cording to a young woman who went to the meeting with him, he asked Giffords a question. After the meeting he told his friend that Giffords was “stupid” and referred to her as a “baby killer.” Giffords has supported repro-ductive rights. This information was aired on CNN on the day of the massacre. It was then taken off the news, never to be referred to again.

So Loughner ignored his numerous recent personal grievances and acted on a long-standing political griev-ance. He chose to kill someone who had done nothing to impede his life; someone he had met three years before and had called a “baby killer.” Furthermore, he may have had other political grievances of a similar nature. We do not know.

Whatever the extent of his psychological disability, he had the same grievance that the ultraright has. He car-ried out in a violent and bloody deed what the ultraright has been repeatedly suggesting in words.

That is the undeniable connection between Loughner and the ultraright.
Why does all this matter?

Tea Party racists spit on Rep. John Lewis

Let us recall the period of the early debate over the health care bill and the Town Hall meetings held by the candidates. This was before the Tea Party, but the types who ultimately became the rank and file of that group were mobilized to attend those rallies. They launched verbal assaults on establishment, bourgeois politicians; some of the ultraright even came with guns.

During the debate, John Lewis — an African-Ameri-can member of Congress from Georgia and a former civil rights activist — was spit on while going into the U.S. Capitol building, as was another Black legislator and a gay congressperson, by a racist Tea Party mob while Capitol police looked on.

The ranks of the ultraright and the fascists — and there is usually a very thin line between the two — are filled with violent racists, and haters of women’s rights, LGBTQ rights and unions. They are out to organize reac-tionary assaults upon the masses whenever the opportu-nity arises. The ruling class uses them in this way.

Why fascists hate bourgeois democracy

They not only want to directly attack the masses but seek the destruction of all bourgeois democratic insti-tutions, precisely because they offer legal and consti-tutional protections to the workers, the oppressed and progressive sections of society. The far right is particu-larly enraged that the electoral process could have led to the election of an African American as president. This has inflamed the racist drive towards fascism.

That is why the fascists direct their threats, violence and intimidation not only at the masses but also at the bourgeois establishment, which wants to carry out ex-ploitation and oppression within the confines of, and under cover of, capitalist democracy.

Letting the ultraright off the hook

The crux of the issue in the Arizona massacre should not have been Loughner himself, seen in isolation and distanced from the menacing political environment cre-ated by the right. Attention should have zeroed in on Palin, Angle, Kelly, Limbaugh, Beck and countless other right-wing riffraff and — equally important — on their corporate backers.

But instead, President Barack Obama delivered a talk, very eloquent and heartrending, at the University of Ari-zona memorial for the victims in which he dwelt on the enormous personal tragedy and called for civility. He was accompanied by Attorney General Eric Holder and Director of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, both of whom recited passages from the Bible. Aside from a vague phrase or two at the very end of Obama’s talk about divisive rhetoric, the ultraright was left completely off the hook.

The question remains then, why did the very capitalist establishment under attack try to cover up for the ultra-right and the fascists?

To be continued.
Goldstein is author of the book “Low-Wage Capital-ism,” a Marxist analysis of globalization and its effects on the U.S. working class. He has also written nu-merous articles and spoken frequently on the present economic crisis. For further information visit www. lowwagecapitalism.com.



★ In the U.S.

Fascism: What it is and how to fight it, part 2 2
Bay Area meetings condemn foreclosures and evictions. 3
Whitby verdicts cover up real hate crime..... 3
Labor/civil rights coalition to defend public sector 4
No more slavery, pay living wage!..... 4
U.S. protesters tell gov’t: ‘Stop supporting dictators!’ 6
Anti-war youth face trial on heavy charges..... 6
Activists in Buffalo, N.Y., show solidarity with Egypt..... 6

★ Black History means fight back

Frantz Fanon and today’s ‘Wretched of the Earth’..... 5
SNCC women were fierce activists 5

★ Around the world

Egyptians stay strong 1
Global solidarity with Egypt 7
Top 10 7
Hail the heroes of Tahrir Square..... 8
‘The Egyptian people are back on the stage of history’ 9
Gov. Fortuño attacks Univ. of Puerto Rico 10
U.S. dictates election results, opposes Aristide’s return 11
Nunusur opens dialogue with U.S. left 11

★ Editorials

Leonard Peltier..... 10

★ Noticias En Español

Defender la educación 12
Los héroes de la Plaza Tahrir 12

Workers World
55 West 17 Street
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: (212) 627-2994
Fax: (212) 675-7869
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org

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Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Technical Editor: Lal Roohk

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell,
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National Office
55 W. 17 St.
New York, NY 10011
212-627-2994
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
P.O. Box 5565
Atlanta, GA 30307
404-627-0185
atlanta@workers.org

Baltimore
c/o Solidarity Center
2011 N. Charles St., Bsm.
Baltimore, MD 21218
443-909-8964
baltimore@workers.org

Boston
284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617-522-6626
Fax 617-983-3836
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
367 Delaware Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14202
716-883-2534
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138
Chicago, IL 60606
773-381-5839
chicago@workers.org

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216-531-4004
cleveland@workers.org

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.
Detroit, MI 48202
313-459-0777
detroit@workers.org

Durham, N.C.
331 W. Main St., Ste. 408
Durham, NC 27701
durham@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 3454
Houston, TX 77253-3454
713-503-2633
houston@workers.org

Los Angeles
5274 W Pico Blvd.
Suite # 207
Los Angeles, CA 90019
la@workers.org
323-515-5870

Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 34249
Philadelphia, PA 19101
610-931-2615
phila@workers.org

Pittsburgh
pittsburgh@workers.org
Rochester, N.Y.
585-436-6458
rochester@workers.org

San Diego, Calif.
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92163
619-692-0355
sandiego@workers.org

San Francisco
2940 16th St., #207
San Francisco
CA 94103
415-738-4739
sf@workers.org

Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300
Washington, DC 20037
dc@workers.org

Bay Area meetings condemn foreclosures and evictions

By Judy Greenspan
San Francisco

Political activists and community organizers, many of them facing home foreclosures themselves, took an active role in a series of meetings and rallies in the San Francisco Bay area the first week of February. In Bayview, San Francisco's largest African-American community and in the mostly Latino/a working-class suburb of Antioch, they began building a fightback movement to demand an end to all foreclosures and evictions.

The featured speaker at all of the events was Jerry Goldberg, an organizer and people's lawyer with the Detroit-based Moratorium Now! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shut-offs. Prior to the public meetings, organizing sessions were held in East Bay communities.

Bayview-Hunters Pointe up until recently has experienced a full 48 percent of San Francisco's foreclosures. So it should have been no surprise that homeowners, tenants and community activists gathered at Bayview's Grace Tabernacle Church to hear Goldberg on Feb. 3 and to participate in a community speakout. Dave Welsh, an organizer with the Bail Out the People Movement, chaired the meeting.

Willie Ratcliff, a local contractor and publisher of the San Francisco BayView National Black Newspaper, spoke about the struggle being waged to create jobs

and win community control of new construction in Bayview. Ratcliff's construction company was originally chosen to build the neighborhood library. Ratcliff recently found out that the job was transferred to a large, outside contractor.

The BayView newspaper had printed a quarter page flyer promoting this anti-foreclosure meeting.

Showing the impact of this issue, Rene Gonzalez, also from the church and an organizer of a group that monitors labor standards for oppressed workers and of a campaign for local hires on city contracts; local activists Marie Harrison and Naim Harrison; and Global Women's Strike Nell Myhand all joined the effort. Some of these organizers were challenging their own foreclosures.

Antioch, about 45 minutes from San Francisco, has been devastated by foreclosures. Workers who earn about \$30,000 a year or who have now lost their jobs got lured into mortgages with principals of \$300,000 or more whose interest rates keep going up, leading to massive home losses. People also came to the Feb. 4 meeting from surrounding Contra Costa County, which leads California in foreclosures.

The meeting, which was translated into Spanish, took place in the parking lot of the community center with loudspeakers and a large banner calling for a moratorium on foreclosures and evictions. It was all put together by the community organizers.



Community members at Antioch, Calif., speak-out against foreclosures. WW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

Delia Aguilar, whose home was placed in foreclosure last year, and Guillermo Briceno of Nuestra Casa Community Services, were major forces behind the Antioch meeting. Aguilar also attended the San Francisco meeting and gave moving testimony about her fight to stay in her home. Led by local organizers, plans are underway to build a strong movement for a moratorium against foreclosures and evictions.

Goldberg's talks included a history of "the war against poor and working people" in Detroit and around the country, first through job loss and now through foreclosures and evictions. The Detroit organizer noted that the first moratorium against foreclosures was won in the 1930s

through direct action. Goldberg, who exposed the rotten role of the banks, urged people to get involved politically and demand that "Housing is a Right!"

Many community members came out to the rallies with their legal paperwork in hand and Goldberg, who is an attorney in Michigan, gave as much advice as he could. While he admitted winning a few legal cases in the courts, he gave example after example of how much more powerful the struggle became when people organized. "For every one case that I have won, I've lost 10," Goldberg said. "But when we have taken direct action by mobilizing the community to stand up, we have been able to win some real victories," he added. □

Whitby verdicts cover up real hate crime

By Sharon Danann
Cleveland

An Ohio jury returned verdicts in the trial of Rebecca Whitby, daughter, and Rebecca Whitby, mother, on Feb. 7, acquitting them on most of the charges. The younger woman, however, was found guilty of one count of resisting arrest and one count of assaulting a police officer with her saliva. The incident occurred in April 2009 after police were called to mediate a family dispute.

Mother Whitby was found guilty of obstruction of justice because she threw her body over her daughter to shield her from punches in the face. Sentencing will be on March 7.

While the defense attorneys did not raise this point in their summation, supporters of the two women say that at least eight white officers positioned themselves on the Whitbys' front porch while the two white cops who responded to the call were upstairs beating up the younger Whitby. The Rebecca Whitby Defense Committee says the two cops upstairs never had time to summon help after they arrived, so they must have called for backup on their way to the Whitby house.

The women and other witnesses say that this large group of officers, who had seemingly no particular reason for being on the scene, brutalized the 23-year-old woman while using racial slurs such as the n-word and derogatory sexual language. That's why the defense committee has raised slogans demanding charges against the cops and has discussed the case as a preplanned hate crime. It was another skirmish in the war on the Black people and the women of Cleveland.

Hate crime perpetrated by blue uniforms

The attack would have been more recognizable as a hate crime had it not been hidden behind blue uniforms and covered

up through intricate machinations at the jail and subsequently at the hospital. The situation was further obscured by the 10 felony charges filed against the daughter and the three felony charges against the mother after they had the courage to request an investigation into the use of excessive force by the police.

The jury asked to see this complaint, but Judge Daniel Gaul denied their request.

On Feb. 3, while the jury was on a break, the most recent example of the thug tactics that permeate the police and judicial system in Cleveland occurred right in the courtroom.

Christine Martin, one of the white neighbors who testified for the defense, gave details of the officers' violent acts. These included kicking and tasing the younger Whitby, already limp and semi-conscious, on the front porch.

Martin says that as she was leaving the courtroom after completing her testimony, Assistant Prosecutor Stephanie Lingle asked a deputy sheriff to arrest her. In front of numerous witnesses, the sheriff said to Martin, "Life's a b — ch," while he handcuffed her roughly, injuring her wrists and shoulder blades in the process, and transported her back into the courtroom.

In the courtroom Martin was told there was a warrant for her for possession of drugs. Prosecutor Sherrie Royster laughed openly at Martin, who was vis-



PHOTO: METROHEALTH MEDICAL CENTER

Rebecca Whitby with her new baby daughter, A'Marhi.

ibly upset, crying and demanding to have her birth date and Social Security number compared to those on the warrant. Other observers came from the judge's chambers to laugh and smile at the obvious discomfort of the defense witness. Lingle commented, "She got what she deserved."

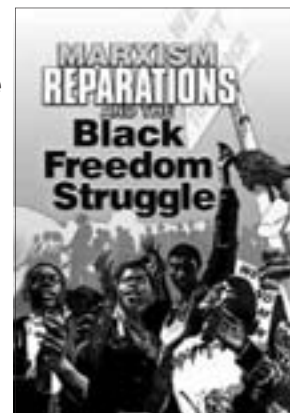
Then, as suddenly as the arrest, someone realized that the outstanding warrant was for a person who did, in fact, have a different birth date. Martin was

free to go, but only after she had been thoroughly terrorized for breaking ranks with the racists and having the integrity to tell the truth about an abusive situation.

Marva Patterson, aunt of the younger Whitby, stated, "Judge Gaul was so mad at the verdicts — you could fry an egg on his head. The verdicts were much better than anything offered in plea bargaining.

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

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Hearing launches labor/civil rights coalition to defend public sector

By Dante Strobino
Goldsboro, N.C.

State mental health workers from across North Carolina spoke out before a “listening panel” at the Rebuilding Broken Places Community Development Center in Goldsboro on Feb. 5. They discussed the impact of inadequate working conditions and the policies and budget decisions that affect delivery of quality care for people with psychiatric and developmental disabilities.

Rev. Dr. William Barber II, president of the North Carolina chapter of the NAACP, chaired the meeting. Community leaders, patient advocates, clergy, labor leaders, state legislators and international human rights experts attended.

The event, which was co-hosted by the North Carolina Public Service Workers Union, United Electrical Workers Local 150 and the NAACP, was the public launch of a major statewide Labor and Civil Rights Coalition in Defense of the Public Sector. This coalition grew out of the fight for public workers’ collective bargaining rights, the campaign by UE 150 for a legislative Mental Health Workers Bill of Rights, and the growing struggle against the state’s looming \$3.7 billion budget shortfall.

All these issues disproportionately affect African-American and Latino/a residents and workers. Budget cutbacks by Gov. Beverly Perdue and the state legislature could result in layoffs of up to 21,000 state workers and have devastating effects on the public service infrastructure — unless a significant fightback is waged.

The coalition is demanding that the state fill the budget gaps not by cutting workers and services but by taxing wealthy individuals and corporations.



Mental health workers join community activists to defend public services and jobs.

WW PHOTO: DANTE STROBINO

The listening panel included Rep. Larry Bell; Sen. Doug Berger; Ajamu Baraka, director of U.S. Human Rights Network; James Andrews, president of the N.C. AFL-CIO; Clayola Brown, national co-chair of the NAACP Labor Committee, president of the A. Phillip Randolph Institute and former vice president of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists; Reuben Blackwell, Rocky Mount City Councilperson; and Vicki Smith, director of Disability Rights N.C.

Della Singleton, a health care technician and UE 150 steward, gave the opening testimony. She spoke from her hospital bed where she was being treated for a bite by a patient, which exposed her to hepatitis. Her serious injury could have been prevented if her employer, the Caswell Developmental Center, had provided

updated hepatitis and tetanus shots; she had not received these since 1994.

“They don’t care about us. This should have never happened,” stated Singleton.

A worker from Cherry Hospital, UE 150 Chapter President William Newsome read testimony for Todd Smith, a registered nurse, who was forced to work overtime and could not attend: “Employees are threatened when they have already worked 12-13 hours with no break and told to work 16 hours or more — ‘or else.’ Yet if that same employee were to nod off after 16 hours, he/she would be fired.”

Workers from Dorothea Dix Hospital, Central Regional Hospital and Murdoch Developmental Center also testified.

Baraka said, “What we have witnessed tonight is something that is occurring across this country and particular in this

southern region. The persistent, systematic assault on the dignity of public workers and people is part of the direction of this country. It is going to require a collective response from all of us to turn it around.”

A legislative Mental Health Workers Bill of Rights is needed to institute fair standards for public sector workers to provide quality care in a state that denies them collective bargaining rights which would help establish enforceable standards. The working conditions place an undue burden on workers who are forced to work overtime in facilities that are understaffed. They earn wages that cannot support their families. It was pointed out that the annual median wage at all these facilities is less than \$28,000; yet the workers live in areas that require more than \$44,000 per year to sustain a family.

Moreover, the workers are blamed for the systemic problems of the Department of Health and Human Services, which include lack of adequate funding and resources by the state.

“How a society treats its people who suffer mental illness is a measure of that society,” said Rev. Barber. “How our society takes care of the people who take care of our friends and neighbors with mental illnesses is also a measure of that society. In North Carolina we need a Mental Health Worker Bill of Rights, and state workers need collective bargaining rights. Anything less is just plain wrong and unjust,” he stressed.

On Feb. 12 the Labor and Civil Rights Coalition in Defense of the Public Sector will join in the fifth annual Historic Thousands on Jones Street People’s Assembly Mass Demonstration. Together with thousands of community members and workers from the HKonJ organizations, they will participate in a march to the North Carolina Legislature where they will deliver a 14-point People’s Agenda. (See www.hkonj.com.) □

No more slavery, pay living wage!

New York — Lower Manhattan came alive Feb. 6 with 150 protesters at two Trader Joe’s stores. “Trader Joe’s, shame on you, farmworkers deserve rights too!” was chanted as bilingual fliers explained the farmworkers’ demands.

This chain has fields of farmworkers working from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. at least six days a week. These sweatshop conditions leave workers making 40 cents to 50 cents for every 32-pound bucket of tomatoes picked. Wages haven’t risen since 1978. A fair price for tomatoes is being demanded by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. CIW launched its Campaign for Fair Food in 2001 with demands that tomato pickers be paid a penny more a pound and work in safe, humane conditions.

At CIW’s initiative and with support from the Community Farmworker Alliance, Trader Joe’s was pressured by many students and union activists, Latino/a and white, demanding an end to virtual slavery in the tomato fields. Farmworkers insisted, “This is the beginning — we want more money per pound! We workers won’t rest until we work in better conditions!” The national food chain was also targeted for not having an agreement with



its workers for an increase in wages and for not giving workers a voice on the job.

Indigenous cultural performances supported these demands, and a vivacious march with music moved from the Trader Joe’s store at 14th and Third Avenue to the one on Sixth Avenue between 21st and 22nd Streets. Some protesters were dressed as huge tomatoes. CIW plans further actions in the near future.

Tell Trader Joe’s to meet with CIW now and stop profiting from the exploitation of farmworkers! (www.ciw-online.org, www.cfa-nyc.org)

— Report and photo by Anne Pruden

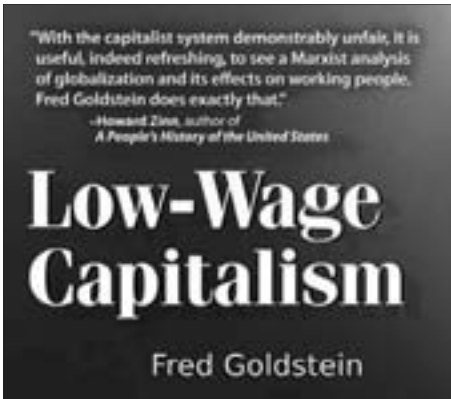
Supporters of Immokalee farmworkers picket Trader Joe’s.

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BLACK HISTORY MEANS HEROIC FIGHTBACK



Frantz Fanon and today's struggles of 'The Wretched of the Earth'

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the death of Frantz Fanon, a revolutionary thinker and practitioner who has had a tremendous impact politically on the African liberation struggle both on the continent and in the diaspora. The recent outbreaks of strikes, mass protests and rebellions in Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt require a reassessment of the significance of the events that Fanon participated in during his lifetime as well as the views expressed through a series of articles and books published in the 1950s and early 1960s.

Fanon's views on the nature of the psychology of the oppressed were studied systematically in France and in North Africa. His analysis of social class formations in colonial societies attempted to gauge the response of these classes to the developing revolutionary struggle against imperialism and for the construction of a socialist society.

His impact on continuing political movements that have arisen since his death, such as the African-American movement of the 1960s and 1970s, should be extended into the current period. This includes examining the U.S. occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, the political upheavals in North Africa related to the influence and presence of U.S. military forces in the region, as well as the escalating struggles of Africans in the diaspora, battling daily against intensified oppression, exploitation and racism.

We have to look at both the political context in which Fanon produced his most significant theoretical formulations and how this context represents a continuation of struggles against U.S. and European imperialist domination in North Africa and the Arab Peninsula.

Also, we must examine the extension of that same struggle of 50 years ago to events taking place today on a global level. Though the form of struggle has changed, the underlying cause for the intensification of military interventions by Western imperialism is clearly an effort to regain the perceived losses of the anti-colonial period beginning with the close of World War II.

Fanon's time in history

Born in the Caribbean island of Martinique in 1925, Fanon was a social product of French colonialism. During the post-World War I period there was a monumental upsurge in political violence throughout the colonized world. In the Caribbean and the U.S., the influence of Marcus Garvey was paramount.

African Americans also began to produce an abundance of cultural materials, which together with Garveyism, spread their influence into colonial territories in

Africa and the Caribbean. The triumph of the 1917 Bolshevik revolution in Russia had a tremendous impact on the rise of anti-capitalist sentiments among oppressed and working people worldwide.

Fanon, who had trained in France as a psychiatrist, was later assigned to work as a functionary of the colonial regime in Algeria, French-occupied since 1830. Fanon began to identify with the Algerian masses in their struggle against colonialism.

Utilizing his observations of the situation involving the liberation of Algeria, Fanon began to develop specific theoretical ideas related to the nature of an anti-colonial struggle during this period. He later participated in the 1956 Black Writer's Conference in Paris, which examined the notion of cultural continuity among African peoples internationally. Even during this early period of his development, Fanon's ideas were running far ahead of his literary and philosophical contemporaries.

In December 1958 he attended the historic All-African People's Conference in

Accra, Ghana, which was convened by the then prime minister and leader of the ruling Convention People's Party, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah.

Fanon was later invited to relocate to Accra as a permanent representative for the Algerian National Liberation Front. His experiences in Ghana as well as Tunisia during this time shaped his observations related to the post-colonial period.

Fanon saw the ideological and political bankruptcy of the post-colonial ruling elite who constituted the dominant social class within many of the nationalist parties which led the fight for independence. According to Fanon's observations, this elite cannot fulfill its historic role of transforming itself from a petit-bourgeois stratum to a full-blown national bourgeoisie in the Western industrial sense of the term.

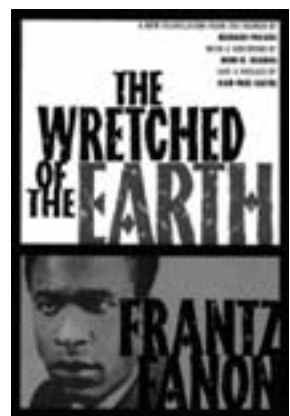
A class such as the petit-bourgeoisie of Africa can only imitate in a vulgar fashion the attributes of the former colonial rulers. Without an objective class basis for the acquisition of capital, the new post-

colonial elite became the automatic junior partners of the international bourgeoisie.

In his ground-breaking book, "The Wretched of the Earth," Fanon says, "The national middle class which takes over power at the end of the colonial regime is an underdeveloped middle class. It has practically no economic power, and in any case it is no way commensurate with the bourgeoisie of the mother country which it hopes to replace."

Fanon continues by pointing out, "In its narcissism, the national middle class is easily convinced that it can advantageously replace the middle class of the mother country. But that same independence which literally drives it into a corner will give rise within its ranks to cata-

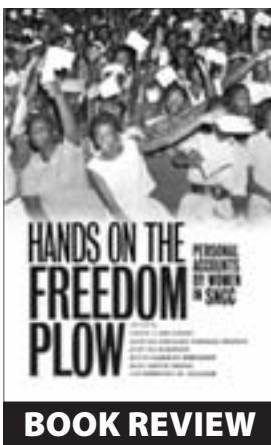
Continued on page 11



SNCC women were fierce activists

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Editor, Pan African News Wire

"Hands on the Freedom Plow: Personal Accounts by Women in SNCC," edited by Faith S. Holsaert, Martha Prescod Norman Noonan, Judy Richardson, Betty Garman Robinson, Jean Smith Young and Dorothy M. Zellner; University of Illinois Press, 2010



BOOK REVIEW

This long-awaited book examines the history of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements from the perspective of the women who played such a pivotal and vital role in shaping African-American and U.S. history during the 1960s. The book is structured around both the personal development of the women who wrote submissions and the transformation of political consciousness within these movements as a whole.

Fifty-two women contributed to the book. They were natives of the North and the South, urban and rural communities, African American, white and Latina. Some of the women came from northern urban areas to join the civil rights struggle, while others were born, bred, educated and shaped by the South and its segregated system of exploitation and oppression against Black people.

All of the women who edited and contributed to the book worked with SNCC,

the pioneering and militant civil rights and later Black power organization that was formed out of the sit-ins that swept the South in the winter and spring months of 1960. These personal accounts span the entire history of the organization from 1960 to 1970.

SNCC was heavily rooted within the African-American communities of the rural South and their educational institutions. Yet the impact of the organization's work influenced a whole generation of white youth.

Although the participants worked within the same organization and have maintained contacts throughout the years, their perspectives and recollections of historical developments are sometimes in conflict.

Motivated to fight injustice

The book begins with the personal account of political transformation and consciousness of Gwendolyn Zoharah Simmons (aka Gwendolyn Robinson) from Memphis who went from a secure African-American family and community to experiencing racism and segregation when she sought to find summer employment. An incident on a Memphis bus where she refused to move to the back fueled her determination to end segregation.

After winning a scholarship to the prestigious, historically Black women's college of Spelman, Simmons recounts how SNCC sent recruiters to campus. She remembers SNCC "had some really effective recruiters. One of the best was Willie Ricks, sometimes called 'Reverend Ricks.' He'd stand on the campus in his blue-jean overalls (the SNCC uniform) and talk about how the SNCC folk were making history while we studied it." (p. 15)

Simmons then joins SNCC, begins wearing her hair natural and demonstrates against segregation and racism in Atlanta. By 1964 she volunteered for the Mississippi Summer Project and faced the dangers of other civil rights workers who organized the Freedom Democratic Party and registered thousands to vote for the first time since Reconstruction.

One of the contributors to the book from the North was Debbie Amos Bell, whose parents were members of the Communist Party. In the section entitled "A Young Communist Joins SNCC," Bell describes attending the founding conference in Raleigh in April 1960 at the aegis of the CP.

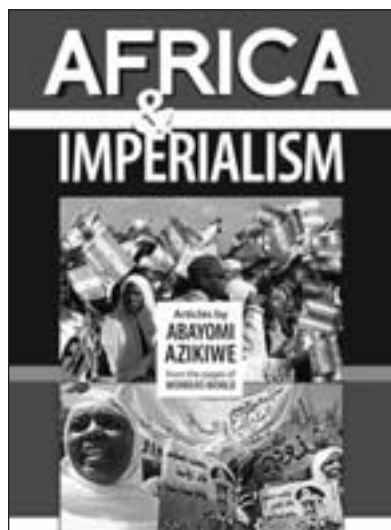
Bell remembers: "The most appealing quality of SNCC for me was that it gave its field-workers plenty of latitude to establish their own style of work to accomplish the stated goals of the organization. Strategy and tactics were collectively discussed, but the individual field secretary had plenty of room to exploit his or her talents." (p. 60)

Bell continues, "Women were generally accepted for their intelligence as well as their organizational skills. At the same time, it was not unusual for me to participate in a meeting dominated by men where it was impossible to interject a word."

The book reveals how the escalation of the struggle from civil rights to black power and revolution, formerly ushered in with the election of Stokely Carmichael (aka Kwame Ture) as chair in 1966, brought even more repression from the federal government and local authorities. In 1966 and 1967 the federal authorities filed criminal charges against numerous male members of SNCC and placed tremendous strains on the organization as a whole.

In 1970 two leading SNCC organizers, Ralph Featherstone and William H. (Che) Payne, were killed in a car explosion in Maryland. Their killers were never brought to justice. It was during this time that former SNCC Chair H. Rap Brown, now known as Jamil Abdullah al-Amin and a current political prisoner, was waiting to stand trial on trumped-up charges stemming from the 1967 rebellions.

These developments along with other ideological and political differences led to the demise of the organization. However, the authors illustrate that fierce activism continued among most of the SNCC women. They have contributed to many other community, national and international organizations. Young activists will be well served to study this first-hand account of one of the most significant periods in U.S. history. □



Africa & Imperialism

Articles by **Abayomi Azikiwe**
from the pages of **Workers World**

- Africa struggles against imperialism
- WikiLeaks on U.S. role in Africa
- Tunisian masses rebel
- South African workers strike
- Women at forefront of liberation struggles
- Africa increases trade with China
- Famine in the Sahel

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U.S. protesters tell government: 'Stop supporting dictators!'

By Betsey Piette

With the popular uprising that is rocking cities across Egypt now heading into its third week, solidarity rallies are building across the U.S. in response. Many of these protests are calling on the U.S. government to end its funding for the repressive regime of Hosni Mubarak.

In the largest **New York City** show of solidarity with the anti-regime revolt in Egypt, thousands of people gathered near Times Square on Feb. 4 and rallied for two hours before marching to the Egyptian Mission to the United Nations. Speakers came from the Egyptian community in the U.S., Arab groups and Muslim organizations. Other immigrant groups and progressive organizations based in the U.S. delivered solidarity messages.

Many bore homemade signs with both a crescent and cross, symbolizing the unity of Muslim and Christian Egyptians against the Mubarak regime. Other signs announced the presence of people originally from Syria, Jordan and other countries in the region. Coverage of the New York rally appeared in the English version of China's Xinhuanet.com.

To ensure that their message reached the media, people in **Atlanta** protested outside the offices of CNN on Feb. 5, occupying all four corners of a busy intersection and chanting passionately for more than three hours. Participants waved Egyptian flags and held signs and banners demanding that U.S.-backed dictator Mubarak and his corrupt regime step down immediately.

Young women played a key role in motivating the crowd of more than 300, with chants like, "Mubarak, pack your stuff,

30 years is enough!" Other chants denounced Egyptian Vice President Omar Suleiman as just another repressive ruler and demanded that the U.S. government stop supporting dictators. Rally participants included entire families from the Egyptian and Arab communities and a significant number of students and anti-war activists. CNN interviewed rally participants and local television, radio and newspapers covered the event.

In the midst of a blizzard on Feb. 5, nearly 100 protesters in **Dearborn, Mich.**, a suburb of Detroit, held a midday picket outside City Hall. Struggling through the ever mounting snow and slush, one woman inspired everyone by coming in her wheelchair, pushed by a friend. Chants were led by Arab youth, including a sister from a new organization, Existence is Resistance. The Detroit metropolitan area is home to the largest Arab and Muslim population outside the Middle East. Participants, including Arab, Muslim, Puerto Rican and white workers, delivered a strong anti-imperialist and pro-internationalist message through their signs and chants. More than one person commented that poor and working people in the U.S. should follow the example set by the people of Egypt, Palestine and North Africa.

The afternoon rally was followed by a candlelight vigil at 5 p.m. outside Dearborn City Hall and a press conference at the Lebanese club. Earlier in the day another rally was held in Royal Oak, a 60,000-person suburb just north of Detroit.

The Midwest blizzard also didn't stop protesters in **Chicago**, who gathered on Feb. 4 to chant, "Brick by brick! Wall by wall! We will see Mubarak fall!"

In **Los Angeles**, solidarity protesters



DEARBORN, MICH.

WW PHOTO: ALAN POLLOCK

rallied on Feb. 5 outside the Westwood Federal Building for a demonstration led by Egyptian student organizations, who utilized Facebook, and the Answer Coalition. Chants were led by Fight Imperialism, Stand Together organizer Mike Martinez. The previous day the International Action Center, BAYAN-USA and Gabriella-USA organized a successful press conference at the Egyptian Consulate under the umbrella of the International League of Peoples Struggles. Participants included members of the Southern California Immigration Coalition; Al-Awda, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition; Anti-Racist Action; the StopFBI Coalition; the Service Employees International Union; the Fellowship of Reconciliation; and other peace organizations. At least 10 television stations covered the event.

More than a hundred people marched through Center City **Philadelphia** on Feb. 2, stopping traffic while they protested the escalation of violence against peaceful protesters in Cairo the day before. The demonstration was led by Egyptian students from Temple and Drexel universities and organized largely through e-mail and postings on Facebook. Entire families from the Arab and Muslim communities turned out carrying Egyptian flags. Cab drivers honked horns in approval, and passersby gave thumbs-up.

The rally was the third in three days in the Philadelphia area.

Around 30 people gathered at a busy intersection near the University of Arizona

in **Tucson, Ariz.**, on Feb. 4 holding signs reading, "We stand with the Egyptian people!" "No U.S. military aid for Egypt!" and "U.S. out of Egypt and the Middle East!" Demonstrators received continuous support from honking rush hour drivers and passersby. The rally was called by Women in Black, a group founded in Israel in 1988 to call for an end to the illegal occupation of Palestine. Many other groups attended, including the International Action Center, the Tucson Committee to Stop FBI Repression and Derechos Humanos.

Downtown **San Diego's** Federal Building was the scene of a large and spirited rally in solidarity with the struggling people of Egypt on Feb. 4. Speakers included Zahi Damuni, representing Al-Awda, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, and a number of Egyptians presently residing in the area.

Close to 60 people rallied in Burnside Park in **Providence, R.I.**, on Feb. 5 calling for an end to U.S. aid to the Mubarak regime. Organized by the Rhode Island Mobilization Committee to Stop War and Occupation, the rally received broad media coverage. The rally was followed by a short march to the State House. The next day 70 people attended a rally at the State House in support of the Egyptian people and for democracy organized by the Rhode Island Council for Muslim Advancement

John Catalinotto, Bob McCubbin, John Parker, Paul Teitelbaum, Jill White, Brian Pfeifer, Bill Bateman and Dianne Mathiowetz contributed to this report.

Anti-war youth face trial on heavy charges

By Kris Hamel
Detroit

The Campaign to Free Ahlam Mohsen and Max Kantar has issued a "call for support and solidarity" to defend the two youth. They are facing up to eight years in federal prison for an anti-imperialist, anti-war protest directed

against U.S. Sen. Carl Levin of Michigan. Levin chairs the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee.

Mohsen and Kantar were indicted on federal felony assault charges for the protest on Aug. 16 at a Democratic Party meeting in Big Rapids, Mich. There Kantar, 23, read a statement denouncing Levin for his "complicity in and support for U.S. war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Middle East." When Kantar finished speaking, Mohsen, also 23, pushed an apple pie in the senator's face.

Mohsen was held in Mecosta County Jail for more than a week following the protest. After a months-long FBI investigation, she and Kantar were indicted Dec. 30 in federal court in Grand Rapids. With supporters packing the courtroom, they were arraigned on Jan. 24. A March 28 trial date has been set. Mohsen and Kantar are being represented by Detroit attorneys Allison Folmar and Jerome Goldberg.



Ahlam Mohsen and Max Kantar.

WW PHOTOS: KRIS HAMEL

A campaign release reads: "Mohsen and Kantar's legal defense team is in immediate need of financial assistance. Please make checks payable to the Campaign to Free Ahlam and Max, c/o MECAWI, and mail to MECAWI at 5920 Second Ave., Detroit, MI 48202. If you have questions, contact the Campaign to Free Ahlam Mohsen and Max Kantar at campaignforfreedom@gmail.com.

"The Campaign also calls on all freedom- and justice-loving people to respectfully demand that the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Michigan drop all charges against Ahlam Mohsen and Max Kantar. Assistant U.S. Attorney Hagen Frank is prosecuting the case." Contact Frank at 330 Ionia Avenue, N.W., Suite 501, Grand Rapids, MI 49503; fax 616-456-2408; email hagen.frank@usdoj.gov.

For more information, visit the freeahlamandmax.blogspot.com. □



Activists in Buffalo, N.Y., show solidarity

A Feb. 1 rally in solidarity with the courageous Egyptian people was held in front of the Buffalo City Hall in near zero wind chill conditions. Participants had a hard time holding up the banner against strong winds and had to keep moving around to prevent frostbitten feet. However, they were warmed with excitement and energy from the millions of their sisters and brothers who have poured onto

the streets in Egypt to demand an end to the brutal U.S.-backed dictatorship of Hosni Mubarak.

Buffalo activists from the environmental, student, prisoners and women's rights struggles joined in. One speaker noted that the bravery of the Egyptian uprising strengthens activists here who speak out against U.S. policies that promote oppression, especially those supporters of Pales-



PHOTO: ANDREA NICHOLLS



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Global solidarity with Egypt

By Caleb T. Maupin

The Egyptian revolt against the U.S.-backed Hosni Mubarak regime has inspired many workers and oppressed people throughout the world. Mass solidarity demonstrations have taken place to show support for Egypt’s popular uprising. Here are brief reports on just a few notable actions, most of them on Feb. 5 or 6.

In **Palestine** demonstrations in the thousands took place in the center of **Ramallah**, with parallel actions in **Bethlehem** and **Nazareth**. Demonstrators carried Egyptian, Tunisian and Palestinian flags. Besides repeating the demands heard from Tahrir Square in Cairo, the demonstrators demanded an end to U.S. and other Western imperialist countries’ aid to the Israeli occupiers. (www.alternativenews.org)

In **Rome** demonstrators gathered outside the Piazza della Repubblica. Communists, forces supporting Palestine, and democracy activists from Sri Lanka were among those who gathered. (bikyamasr.com)



CHICAGO
WW PHOTO: JILL WHITE



WW PHOTO: ELLIE DORRITIE

tine who are refusing to be intimidated by FBI threats and reprisals.

The rally was endorsed by Animal Allies of Western NY; Buffalo Womenservices; Buffalo/Western N.Y. International Action Center; Susan Marie Public Relations; Western New York Peace Center and Workers World Party.

— **Ellie Dorritie**
& Bev Hiestand



PHOTO: GABI SENFT

In **Amsterdam** people called out by the Dutch Socialist Party gathered to stand with the Egyptians. They also protested the sale of Dutch armored vehicles to Egypt. (www.almasryalyoum.com)

In **Iran** many cities had massive demonstrations in support of the Egyptian people and against Mubarak and Israel. The rallies had the support of the govern-

ment and 214 Iranian lawmakers, who also issued a statement in support of the Egyptian people. (www.tehrantimes.com)

In **Baku, Azerbaijan**, demonstrations were held in front of a statue of Mubarak. The protesters tried to link the crimes of Mubarak with their struggles, demanding cheaper water, public transportation and postal services, all of which

are facing massive government cuts. The police, part of another U.S.-backed autocratic regime, forcibly ended the protests. (www.rferl.org)

Demonstrations were held outside the Egyptian Embassy in **Berlin** and **Munich** as well as in **London** and in **Sydney, Australia**.

The Egyptian Embassy in **Ottawa** was also targeted by a rally supporting the Egyptian uprising. Protests took place in **Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver** and other Canadian cities.

In **Beirut, Lebanon**, the Egyptian Embassy has been the scene of protests for more than a week, with rallies called by the Communist Party, the Union of Democratic Youth and various Islamic organizations. Among the slogans was “Mubarak, you’re an imposter, an invader for the Americans!” (www.dailystar.com.lb)

A massive rally held in **New Delhi, India**, was called by a new mass organization, the Egypt Solidarity Forum. In a statement, the ESF declared, “We believe that Egyptian people are victims of their own rulers as well as their Western masters.” It went on to say: “Hosni Mubarak has protected interests of capitalists, multinationals and his Western masters, mainly the United States.” (twocircles.net)

The Socialist Party of Malaysia has been holding solidarity actions regularly at the embassies of Egypt and the U.S. in **Kuala Lumpur**, which thousands attended on Feb. 4. (news release, PSM)

Nearly all the demonstrations around the world, including a large number not listed here, made an effort to link the corrupt Mubarak regime with its capitalist backers. The struggle against massive cuts in public services throughout the world, forcing workers to bear the brunt of the capitalist crisis, have been highlighted at nearly every solidarity protest. □

TOP 10

BY PAUL WILCOX

People the U.S. government has considered to replace Mubarak as the new president of Egypt:

1. The former Shah of Iran, a loyal Pentagon servant and torturer. Only problem: He’s dead.
2. Benito Mussolini, except he was killed and hung upside down by Italian partisans in 1945.
3. Gumby, very pliable, but not much of a leader.
4. Ben Bernanke, Federal Reserve chair. He bailed out banks here; maybe he could bail us out in Egypt.
5. George W. Bush. He’d be great, but no one thinks he’s Egyptian.
6. The Shah of Iran — dammit, he’s still dead.
7. King Louis XVI of France, except he was guillotined way back in 1793.
8. Anyone with the words “torture,” “billionaire” and “CIA” in their resumé.
9. King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. Mubarak flies there; Abdullah goes to Egypt. What’s not to like?
10. Are you sure the Shah of Iran is really dead? He’d be perfect.

E-mail: pwilcox@workers.org



WW PHOTO: BOB MCCUBBIN

Hail the heroes of Tahrir Square

By Fred Goldstein

Feb. 4 — The battle in Cairo’s massive central square to oust the dictator and U.S. stooge Hosni Mubarak will go down in history as a pivotal moment, whatever its outcome.

The masses in Tahrir (Liberation) Square — now known among the fighters as Martyrs’ Square — gave the counterrevolutionary thugs of a dying regime blow for blow, pushed them back and held the square, thus achieving both a military and political victory. They were fully aware of the crucial political importance of holding the square for the people. This was a victory for the masses of Egyptian people, the people of the Middle East as a whole, and the workers and oppressed of the world.

The Mubarak regime made a brutal attempt to reverse the powerful momentum of the uprising after millions of people had come out for the “million person march” all over the country on Tuesday. What was purported to be the largest demonstration in the history of Cairo gathered in Tahrir Square.

Key to the Mubarak regime’s desperate attempt to regain its position was the drive to sweep the demonstrators away by force and violence and take the square for the counterrevolution. In addition to aiming for the political symbolism of retaking the square from the popular anti-government forces, the goal was to sow terror

and fear among the population.

Thanks to the thousands of defenders who risked life and limb for two days, the regime failed on both counts. The defense of the square on Wednesday and Thursday, Feb. 2 and 3, cleared the way for the enormous outpouring on Friday, the “Day of Departure,” and allowed the struggle to regain its forward momentum.

Undoubtedly, the White House, the Pentagon, the State Department and Wall Street all watched the heroic defense in and around the square with great apprehension as they saw Mubarak’s thugs beaten back. This must have accelerated the efforts of the imperialist ruling class to pressure Mubarak to get out.

The defense of the square was a glorious example of rapid self-organization by the people. Thousands of demonstrators vowed to remain in the square until Mubarak and his regime were gone. They were suddenly confronted by thousands of plainclothes police, Ministry of the Interior spies and employees, members of the ruling party and miscellaneous hired thugs. There are 1.5 million police and 3 million members of the ruling party.

These dregs of Egyptian society had been brought in by buses and vans by the regime to a staging area near the square. At 2:15 p.m. they were given the signal to charge. The military, which at first held them back, let them in to go on a rampage. Wielding pipes, chains, rubber hoses, knives, clubs with nails in them,

and guns, and hurling rocks and Molotov cocktails, they charged the unarmed demonstrators.

Within a short time the demonstrators set up defense barricades of metal sheets, iron fences, overturned cars, boards and anything else that could serve as a shield and a barrier. Groups were organized to defend different points and to set up checkpoints around and leading to the square.

The sidewalks were chopped up to make rocks to throw. Bottles were brought from everywhere to make Molotov cocktails. An unnamed Al Jazeera online producer was on the scene and reported from a checkpoint into the square: “Rocks were stacked in piles around the streets and Molotov cocktail bottles sat next to one another near a tree — a revolutionary armory.” Food and other supplies were brought in and distributed. A steady drumming kept up morale.

The reporter spoke with Hossan Eid al-Sharqawy, the leader at the checkpoint. “Hosni Mubarak kills his own people,” he said. “If I die here tonight, you will tell my story.”

That explains how the mood and the slogans changed in the square from “We’re going to stay in the square” to “We’re going to die in the square.”

As the battle became fierce, casualties mounted on both sides. Hundreds of demonstrators received head wounds, stab wounds and broken bones. Many

suffered gunshot wounds. Before dawn on Thursday, the government thugs opened fire. The number of deaths in the square was reported as 10 to 15, but was probably much greater.

Makeshift field hospitals were set up in alleyways. One mosque was turned into a field hospital. Volunteer doctors poured into the square to help the wounded while demonstrators assisted. “Mubarak told them to kill us,” said Osama Hilal, a doctor who was treating the wounded at a makeshift triage center. “He thinks he will succeed to make all the people get out of the square. But we will not leave.” (Washington Post, Feb. 2)

The defenders captured 350 of the counterrevolutionary forces. The office of a travel agency was transformed into a holding center for the captured thugs. They were handcuffed with plastic twists. Police and Ministry of Interior identity cards as well as National Democratic Party cards were taken and shown to the press. They were then turned over to the army.

The bravery, determination, creativity and resourcefulness of the unarmed masses on-the-spot military organizing to beat back this vicious surprise attack shows what potential there is for much wider and broader mass efforts. They will be needed to drive out the old regime, which is backed by U.S. imperialism and all the imperialist powers, which want to hold the reins of Egyptian society, by hook or by crook. □

EGYPTIANS STAY STRONG

Continued from page 1

marched in Alexandria, Egypt’s second-largest city, and appeared to be the largest assemblage in that city since the million-person march a week ago.

There are reports that first-time demonstrators have shown up, including members of the civil service despite their just being granted the promise of a 15 percent raise in salary by Mubarak. Contributing to the turnout was an impassioned interview by Wael Ghonim, a Google employee, after his release from nine days of incarceration by the Egyptian authorities. Ghonim administered the Facebook page “We Are All Khaled Said,” dedicated to the memory of a 28-year-old man beaten to death by Egyptian police in Alexandria on June 6, 2010.

The Facebook page, which gathered 70,000 viewers overnight, had called for the Jan. 25 demonstration that triggered the present upsurge. Ghonim broke down during the broadcast on privately held Dream TV when he heard of the 300 martyrs and thousands of injured. He expressed his condolences “for all those Egyptians who died.” He said he did not want to be declared a hero. “The heroes are the ones on the street,” he said.

Tents have been put up all around the square, which many are calling “the Republic of Tahrir.” The protesters have established a permanent presence.

Obama administration wants “transition” to keep the old order

Despite the determination of the masses to oust Mubarak and the entire hated regime of authoritarian military officers, police officials, businessmen and corrupt politicians, the Obama administration has thrown its support behind Suleiman. He is their point man to orchestrate a “transition” that will sustain Washington’s strategic interests and domination over the Egyptian government.

Apparently the Obama administration, the Egyptian ruling class, the Israeli regime and the Saudi bourgeois feudal monarchy have all come to the conclusion that the resignation of Mubarak, under any circumstances, in the face of mass protests right now would only embolden the people and lead to even greater demands.

Suleiman has stated that Mubarak has no intention of resigning and that Egypt is not ready for democracy. Suleiman has refused to lift the hated Emergency Law that has been in effect since 1981 and has appointed a commission of so-called “Wise Men” from the old order to supervise the “transition” to reform.

His statement about Egyptians not being ready for democracy was so outrageous that both Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and press secretary Robert Gibbs had to denounce it. Yet the entire administration, including President Obama, has praised Suleiman for moving on “the right track.”

Suleiman, former head of the Ministry of the Interior, has supervised Egypt’s participation in the U.S. special rendition program, whereby people taken prisoner by the U.S. are transferred to overseas prisons to be tortured. Egypt was a preferred country. Suleiman personally tortured important prisoners, including an Egyptian-born Australian, Mamdouh Habib.

Suleiman also led the attempt to crush Hamas, the elected leadership of the Palestinian people, and supervised the destruction of tunnels leading from Egypt into Gaza that had been dug to break the Israeli-Egyptian blockade on food and supplies getting to the embattled Palestinian population there.

Suleiman is a former general and part of the U.S.-created military group that oversees U.S. military interests in the region. As such, Suleiman represents not only the secret police but also the en-

trenched military group that has preyed upon the country.

The Egyptian military high command has many businessmen in uniform. They are active in exploiting the water, olive oil, cement, construction, hotel and gasoline industries. They also have control of the production of televisions, milk and bread. (New York Times, Feb. 6) Together with the military and the police, Mubarak’s National Democratic Party, which has been described as a collection of business interests disguised as a political party, makes up the old order that has left the majority of the population subject to grinding poverty, structural unemployment and arbitrary repression by the state.

The common demand of the opposition is the immediate ouster, if not arrest, of Mubarak. As a prelude to sweeping reform, their demands include the formation of an interim government of national unity representing broad sectors of the Egyptian population; abolition of Mubarak’s National Democratic Party; dissolution of the corrupt parliament; drawing up a new constitution; and democratic elections.

These demands boil down to a transition from a military-police dictatorship to a political democracy — i.e., to bring about a national democratic revolution.

As against this, U.S. imperialism and the entrenched upper echelons of the old order in Egypt want to manage a “transition” to save themselves and their interests. Above all, the U.S. wants to insure the peace treaty with Israel; the use of Egypt as a strategic military staging ground and watchdog for the region; the CIA-Egypt connection; and security for U.S. big business in Egypt, in particular open access to the Suez Canal for the oil monopolies and U.S. Navy ships, among other things.

This requires maintaining the hard core of the old order: the military high command, the secret police apparatus

and other repressive forces of the state. And the Egyptian ruling class wants to “transition” in such a way as to leave their interests secure.

It has been revealed in mass media sources, including by Wolf Blitzer on CNN, that the Mubarak family has amassed as much as \$70 billion in wealth, which is spread out in banks and properties all over the world.

Goals of masses versus aims of U.S. imperialism

The goal of these partners in crime is to keep the fundamental levers over Egyptian society in their hands while placating the demands of the masses for a national democratic revolution. This means dragging out the process and finding some formula for fraudulent democracy that leaves the core elements of the old order in place.

It is precisely the military, the police and the Egyptian comprador bourgeoisie behind the dictatorship that now want a mere cosmetic change.

Millions of Egyptian people are now mobilizing on a greater scale than has been seen in 30 years of police state repression, the iron fist which allowed the plundering of the country’s wealth by a corrupt gang financed and supported by Washington. The people’s goals are utterly irreconcilable with the aims of imperialism and the Egyptian ruling class, which is trying to hold on by a combination of maneuvering, force and the threat of force.

History has reached a point in Egypt where the conflict between reaction and social progress for the masses has been fully joined. One side or the other must triumph. The unvanquished steadfastness, the volcanic awakening of the Egyptian people gives the whole world hope that the old order will eventually be swept away in the tide of mass struggle and take the imperialists with them. □

‘The Egyptian people are back on the stage of history’

This article is based on a talk given by Joyce Chediac at a Feb. 4 Workers World Forum in New York City.

The Egyptian people have stepped back on the stage of history. In one of the most epic of moments, virtually the entire population of Egypt, except those closely tied to the corrupt Mubarak regime, have risen up in a national democratic revolution to demand the ouster of Hosni Mubarak and his clique.

Egypt, the very heart of the Arab nation, has shaken the world, causing the imperialists and their clients across the globe to feel their vulnerability, and the workers and oppressed people worldwide to feel a new sense of strength and power. Such is the power of the people in motion in this strategic nation. With 80 million people, Egypt is the largest Arab country with the largest working class and the largest military. It is strategically located between three continents. It is often said, “As Egypt goes, so goes the Arab world.”

In the Middle East the relationship of forces has been irrevocably changed. The oppressed people in the direct line of Israeli confrontation, the Lebanese and the Palestinians, now have a stronger hand against their oppressors.

Battle for Tahrir Square marks new stage in struggle

February 3 marked a new and deeper stage in the rapidly developing Egyptian revolution. For two days unarmed protesters in Tahrir Square fought thousands of plainclothes police and government-hired thugs and won on Feb.3. Even the New York Times was forced to admit the significance of this struggle in a Feb. 3 article: “The future of the Arab world, perched between revolt and the contempt of a crumbling order, was fought for in the streets of downtown Cairo. Tens of thousands of protesters

who have re-imagined the very notion of citizenship in a tumultuous week of defiance proclaimed with sticks, homemade bombs and a shower of rocks that they would not surrender their revolution to the full brunt of an authoritarian government that answered their calls for change with violence.

“The Arab world watched a moment that suggested it would never be the same again — and waited to see whether protest or crackdown would win the day. Words like ‘uprising’ and ‘revolution’ only hint at the scale of events in Egypt, which have already reverberated across Yemen, Jordan, Syria and even Saudi Arabia, offering a new template for change in a region that long has reeled from its own sense of stagnation.”

In a show of victory, the next day huge numbers poured into Tahrir Square. Among them were Egyptian Defense Minister Hussein Tantawi and other senior army officials in a sign that, at least for now, the military will not be used against the protesters. That the military commanders felt they had to visit the square shows the sheer strength of the people’s movement, that and no more.

U.S. & Israel could not stop uprising

The Pentagon has more than 700 military bases around the world, a huge naval fleet in the Mediterranean, and enough nuclear weapons to destroy the world many times over, but it could not stop the rising of the Egyptian people. Israel, the blockader of Gaza, the torturer of the Palestinian people, and the destroyer of the civilian infrastructures of Gaza and Lebanon, could not stop the mass outpouring of Egyptians either. With the vulnerability of both U.S. imperialism and Israel exposed, Washington fears that its domination of this strategic, oil-rich area of the world might come completely undone by the struggle in Egypt.

“In a matter of days, every assumption about the United States relationship with Egypt was upended,” said Robert Malley, Middle East and North Africa program director for the International Crisis Group. (NY Times, Feb. 2) The protests in Egypt have thrown the Israeli government into turmoil, with military officials holding lengthy strategy sessions and Ehud Barak, the Israeli defense minister, consulting with U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. Israel fears the undoing of its 1979 treaty with Egypt, which took Egypt out of the progressive camp and placed it on the side of Israel and the U.S. This freed Israel for further aggression against Lebanon and the Palestinian people.

Israel and the U.S. also fear Egypt’s opposition group, the Muslim Brotherhood, which has fraternal ties with Hamas in Gaza.

U.S. aims

U.S. imperialism would like to crush the Egyptian revolution, but it cannot. Instead it is scrambling to do damage control. The U.S. has very close ties to the top military brass. In fact, the whole Egyptian general staff was meeting in the Pentagon when the rebellion began. They rushed home. The U.S. wants to eventually ease out Mubarak and negotiate with the pro-imperialist Egyptian military that the Pentagon has trained and armed for a transition, which would eventually set up elections but leave the same old policies in place. A key figure in this plan is the newly appointed Vice President, Omar Suleiman. He is known in Egypt as the hated chief of intelligence and a torturer. But Suleiman is also the CIA’s point man for renditions, the covert military program in which U.S. forces kidnap alleged “terror” suspects around the world and send them to Egypt, where they are held in secret jails and tortured. Suleiman is in

constant contact with Washington. However, there are great risks for Washington in any change in the status quo, and this is why it has pulled back from its demand that Mubarak leave office soon. The Egyptian military is not monolithic, and many in the midlevel officer corps resent the corruption and privilege of the top officers, according to the Feb. 5 New York Times.

Class character of the Egyptian military

On the one hand, the Egyptian military is not fundamentally different from the police, in and out of uniform, who are attacking the people. It is the armed wing of the state, the armed bodies of men whose existence and implied threat of deployment make the day-to-day violence of a capitalist state possible.

Egypt’s armed forces comprise a huge military designed for imperialist intervention. Per capita, they have twice as many personnel as the U.S. military. And the Mubarak government, the same government that gives orders to the police, also gives orders to the military.

On the other hand, this is the military of an oppressed nation and it has a progressive past. In 1952 Gamal Abdel Nasser led the Free Officers Movement to seize power and depose King Farouk, a British puppet.

The Egyptian army fought four wars against Israel, which gives it prestige. And when President Anwar al Sadat was assassinated in 1981, it was by forces within the military and it was because Sadat signed the 1979 accord with Israel, which many Egyptians considered treachery.

This is a conscripted army. Rank-and-file soldiers provide the only consistent source of income for many Egyptian families.

When the tanks rolled into Tahrir Square, the army was hailed by the demonstrators. As soon as the military was deployed, fraternizing began between the demonstrators and soldiers. Captains as well as rank-and-file soldiers have been reported greeting the demonstrators and cheering them on.

If the army were ordered to move against the people, that could drive many of the ranks actively over to the side of the people and into combat against the police and the regime.

Bruce Riedel, a former Egypt analyst for the CIA, gave a blunt assessment: “They could shoot the crowd, they win tomorrow, and then there will be a revolt that will sweep them away.” (New York Times, Jan. 30)

So the lower ranks of the army have a foot in each camp. This is a highly unstable and temporary situation.

What are the options? The army could split, with a sector of the officer corps moving in a more nationalist and anti-imperialist direction. Rank-and-file soldiers could desert and melt into the protesting crowds. But if the military remains intact, as it is now, it takes its orders from the most reactionary and pro-imperialist forces in Egypt, who want to use its force against the uprising as soon as an opportunity presents itself.

Demonstrators have noted that when police thugs attacked them on Feb. 2 and 3, the army stood by and did nothing. Protesters at Tahrir Square are constantly talking to the military, chiding and cajoling them, educating them and trying to win them over. □

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WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

Protest in solidarity with Egyptian people in New York City on Feb. 5.

Solidarity with Leonard Peltier

U.S. imperialism has carried out tortures in occupied Guantanamo and in prisons of Afghanistan and Iraq. It has arranged the “special rendition” of some prisoners, outsourcing them to professional torturers like Washington’s Egyptian collaborator, Omar Suleiman, who is now that country’s new vice president. This horrific treatment of political prisoners abroad is but an extension of the treatment meted out to the U.S. ruling class’s political prisoners on the home front. The cruelty of the institutions of “justice” is especially unforgiving when the prisoner is from one of the oppressed nations living within U.S. borders and the alleged crime is against the state apparatus.

Thus Leonard Peltier, a leader of the heroic Wounded Knee uprising of Native peoples in the mid-1970s, has been held in federal prisons in the U.S. for more than 35 years. He was

framed up and has been punished for allegedly participating in a shootout with FBI agents at Oglala in North Dakota, who were themselves conducting illegal counterintelligence activities aimed at destroying the American Indian Movement. Not one witness identified Peltier as the shooter of the two FBI agents killed. A Native man, Joseph Stuntz, was also killed by a bullet to the head. No one was ever charged in his death.

During these 35 years in prison Peltier has been denied adequate medical attention and suffered abuse so that his health is seriously damaged. The Leonard Peltier Defense-Offense Committee has requested that all progressive forces write to demand that he receive proper medical care in a Feb. 6 call to action. For additional information and to print material offered, see www.whoisleonardpeltier.info. The defense committee’s appeal follows:

Medical alert: A call to action

At this time, Mr. Peltier’s most pressing need is proper medical care. His only hope of being seen by qualified physicians and receiving care that complies with standard medical protocols is to be immediately transferred to another facility. For background information on this current crisis, read our November 2010 press release. You can help. Please print the following letter. Sign the letter; write your name and mailing address; and mail or fax your letter today.

Mail to: Federal Bureau of Prisons, 320 1st Street, NW, Washington, DC 20534, or fax to: (202) 514-6620

Sample Text

Often a handwritten heartfelt letter is quite effective. Remember to always employ a respectful tone and keep your comments brief and to the point. If you wish, you may adapt the following text.

Harley G. Lappin
Director, U.S. Bureau of Prisons
320 First Street, NW, Washington, DC 20534

Dear Mr. Lappin:

It has come to my attention that Leonard Peltier #89637-132, an inmate at the U.S. Penitentiary in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, is in dire need of medical attention.

I believe that Mr. Peltier’s medical needs are urgent. He needs to be seen by proper medical staff. Therefore, I respectfully request that Leonard Peltier be transferred to FCI-Oxford in Wisconsin or FMC-Rochester in Minnesota. Either of these facilities can adequately accommodate Mr. Peltier’s medical needs.

Thank you in advance for transferring Leonard Peltier and immediately addressing his medical needs!

Sincerely,
Signature



GAZA: Symbol of Resistance

WW compilation, edited by Joyce Chediac

The compelling story of how Gazans withstood blockade and bombardment only to stand tall, refusing to give up the right to determine their own lives and to choose their own government; how Gaza’s courage inspired a worldwide solidarity movement determined to break the blockade and deliver aid; exposes the forces behind the punishment of Gaza, and how a growing people’s media is breaking the mainstream media’s information blockade on this event.

Available at leftbooks.com

Letter to WW:

Gov. Fortuño attacks Univ. of Puerto Rico

The struggle continues between the people of Puerto Rico, represented by students at the University of Puerto Rico, and the right-wing, pro-statehood neoliberal government of Luis Fortuño.

The new school semester started on Feb. 7. In an action they called “entra y sal pa’ fuera” (walkin/walkout), striking students at the Rio Piedras campus upped the ante by going from building to building, singing slogans to the rhythm of plenas, beating drums, and calling on students who had gone to class to come out and join the protest to defend public education and to oppose the \$800 fee imposed by the university administration and the Puerto Rican government.

This action defied a prohibition against protests imposed by Provost Ana Guadalupe and also Gov. Fortuño’s “fast track” law imposed Feb. 4 that says any obstruction of access to educational or health services is a minor offense.

Despite heavy police presence, including a SWAT team ready to take action against the students, the demonstration took place as planned. The students’ courageous action was able to stave off any repressive actions by the police. The students were supported by a 24-hour encampment in front of the campus set up by an amalgam of unions, community, university and political and religious groups,

More actions are to take place throughout the week, including a protest on Feb. 8 against Fortuño’s yearly message to the country and an “I love the UPR” national march on Feb. 12.

The letter below to WW from Professor Elizabeth J. Hodges of the Humacao campus tells of concern over the repressive and vindictive policy of the government.

Workers World’s stellar reporting has informed readers of the ongoing political and social instability in Puerto Rico resulting from the neoliberal policies of Republican Gov. Luis Fortuño. Recent events have gone from bad to worse. Fortuño, who courts major Tea Party big-money donors at Heritage Foundation events, has dismayed the nation with his callous disregard for the role of education in Puerto Rico.

In a society already dramatically divided socio-economically, his administration has waged a heinous assault to weaken the University of Puerto Rico by undermining its financial stability. Through the much-criticized Law 7, state funds assigned to the university coffers were so severely cut that some campuses of the commonwealth’s public university system are teetering on the brink of financial collapse.

Despite funds being expressly set aside by the Government Development Bank for stabilization of the university’s financial crisis, the statehood party’s majority voted against freeing the funds to ensure ongoing operations. Instead, the UPR’s president and Board of Trustees invoked a loophole in the since-discarded agreements from the 2010 student strike to impose an \$800 yearly quota across the board for all students.

The students, those most affected, are the university’s weakest economic link, especially the more marginalized sectors who are already at risk by virtue of their social class. In spite of students’ valiant efforts to resist the government’s concerted efforts to weaken the public university,

the community has little recourse against impending havoc: thousands of the nation’s youth being denied an education at a cost within their means.

In the last month, heavy-handed police techniques have been used to rein in protesters intent on claiming their right to affordable education. Decades-old standing agreements that prohibited the use of police on university grounds were violated. The incursion of mounted riot police and armed SWAT teams has dismayed even those politically sympathetic to the governor’s policies.

Nonetheless, the turn of recent events is enough to offend the common decency of even hardened political observers. Over the last several weeks, students have upped the ante in their struggle against the infamous quota and have adopted civil disobedience to pressure the university and the government to identify alternative funding sources to cover the UPR’s deficit.

The government response to protesters has been beyond harsh; it has relied upon police brutality that recalls the most violent events of student strikes in Puerto Rico in the 1970s.

The arrests of students and sympathizers defending public education have crossed acceptable boundaries of law and civil rights. Members of the press, themselves among the victims of police brutality, have described treatment of protesters by police as abusive, even as torture. Frightening images easily available on the Internet leave little doubt that violations of civil rights are rampant.

More troubling is that the police tactics are justified at the highest levels. The argument made by Puerto Rican Secretary of State Marcos Rodriguez Emma is that access to the UPR must be guaranteed and protesters violated the law by obstructing free access to public domain, so all measures to reestablish police control are justified. This position doesn’t stand the test of law: the American Civil Liberties Union and the U.S. Justice Department have already drawn their attention to the island to gather evidence on civil rights violations.

Protesters are being brutalized. Women are being manhandled. Dozens of students are hauled off to police stations and are held for hours, even overnight, reportedly intimidated while in police custody, without formal charges being filed. Even uninvolved passersby at protest sites have been attacked by pepper spray and rubber bullets and hauled off to jail, all flagrant violations of law.

The Puerto Rican Constitution protects citizens from these violations of rights, as affirmed in legal precedents such as *People v. Rey Marrero*, 109 D.P.R. 739 (1980), that safeguards citizens’ rights against being taken into police custody without adequate justification.

Prior to recent events, civil disobedience was less widely known in Puerto Rico than on the U.S. mainland. That may soon change, as public outcry over civil rights violations of protesters and observers becomes part of the larger public discourse.

Whether the students’ cause will spread to a broader consciousness, or Governor Fortuño’s administration will continue to trample both public education and the people’s rights with impunity, is a question that the people themselves will have to answer.

**Elizabeth J. Hodges, full professor
University of Puerto Rico at Humacao**

HAITI

U.S. dictates election results, opposes Aristide’s return

By G. Dunkel

In the midst of the gravest foreign policy crisis since assuming her job — the mass uprising in Egypt — U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton went to Haiti on Jan. 30.

She didn’t go there to announce a program to house the 1.5 million Haitians — about 20 percent of the Haitian people — who have been homeless since the Jan. 12, 2010, earthquake that killed 316,000 people and injured hundreds of thousands more.

Clinton did visit a cholera treatment center, but she made no statement about the epidemic. Imported to Haiti by U.N. occupation forces, it killed 4,030 people and sickened more than 200,000 as of Jan. 24.

What Clinton did was get the Haitian government of President René Préval to accept a deal concocted by an Organization of American States special mission investigating the Nov. 27 first-round presidential elections.

The Haitian Electoral Council (CEP) had declared Jude Célestin, the candidate of Inite (Unity, Préval’s party) to be one of the top two candidates and thus eligible to be in the runoff. However, the OAS mission found that Célestin had come in third.

Under tremendous pressure from Clinton, Préval backed down and got his protégé Célestin to withdraw. The final round of voting is set for March 20.

But, as Préval pointed out, six out of the seven “experts” on the OAS mission came from the U.S., France and Canada, the three countries that overthrew President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 2004. According to Mark Weisbrot, the Center for Economic Policy and Research co-director and co-author of a Jan. 17 analysis of the Haitian elections, more than 150,000 votes were missing and the OAS mission ignored them. The OAS nevertheless put Célestin in third place by a margin of 0.3 percent, a few thousand votes. (www.cepr.net)

The irregularities in the OAS mission report were so glaring that the OAS Coun-

cil in a meeting Jan. 28 refused to accept it — but just forwarded it to the CEP.

The Congressional Black Caucus, in its first break with President Obama’s foreign policy, called for completely new elections. The CBC press release read, “The CBC urges the United States and the international community to uphold the ideals of fairness and support a new Haiti election process that is free and fair, respecting the rights of the Haitian people.” (See recent headlines on ijdh.org)

The issue that underpins all this maneuvering is the possible return of former President Aristide to Haiti. Ever since Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier, one of Haiti’s most brutal and greedily corrupt dictators, showed up Jan. 17 in a bid to get his hands on some money, the question of the day has been: If Duvalier can return, why not Aristide?

Aristide released a statement on Feb. 4 to the Guardian, a major daily in England, vowing to return and to work to reform the “profit-driven, exclusionary” way in which

Haiti is being rebuilt by non-Haitians.

Some recent cables exposed on WikiLeaks have made it clear that Washington is unalterably opposed to Aristide’s return and that his threatened return was probably part of Préval’s attempt to push back the U.S. Aristide’s return would most certainly add to the pressure to call new elections, since Fanmi Lavalas—Aristide’s party and the most popular one in Haiti — was excluded from the Nov. 28 elections. The CEP had claimed Fanmi Lavalas didn’t fill out the forms correctly, but most Haitians believe that the CEP wanted to exclude Fanmi Lavalas so Aristide’s party couldn’t win.

That Haiti has managed to survive a foreign military occupation, a devastating earthquake, a tsunami, a deadly cholera epidemic, a hurricane and heavy rainstorms, 80 percent unemployment and massive homelessness without its society falling apart testifies to the resilience and determination of the Haitian people. One of their crying needs is effective and mobilized international solidarity.

Nunosur opens dialogue with U.S. left

By Judy Greenspan
San Francisco

The newly formed Nunosur (Nuestro Norte Es el Sur), an organization of Latin American revolutionaries and activists, held a historic opening dialogue with U.S. revolutionary groups and individuals on Jan. 21 in the auditorium of Centro del Pueblo in San Francisco’s Mission District.

After a Latin American dinner, the program was opened with a political presentation documenting more than 150 years of U.S. imperialist intervention and occupation of Latin America. Talks were given by

Nunosur members from Nicaragua, Peru, Argentina, Colombia, El Salvador, Bolivia and Ecuador. Alicia Jrapko from the International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban Five also gave a special report on the status of these five heroes held in U.S. jails.

Standing beneath a poster of Che Guevara, each speaker emphasized the critical role U.S. revolutionaries and progressives must play in this country. Latin American activists also emphasized that U.S. progressive forces must respect the right of self-determination for all people struggling for their liberation. The invitation to the meeting, which was extended to a

broad array of U.S. working-class parties and activists, stated, “We believe that it is urgent for the people of the United States of America to stop their government from interfering in the affairs of our countries.” In particular, the meeting addressed the need to support Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Argentina and other countries that are working to “change the conditions of their working class” and break free of U.S. imperialism.

Cristina Gutiérrez, a Colombian activist, spoke about the need to support the revolutionary struggle against the U.S.-backed government of her country. “The Colom-

bian government would not last a year without the support of the U.S. government. We are at war with the oligarchy of Colombia and will not let this government define our freedom fighters as terrorists,” said Gutiérrez, referring to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC.

The dialogue between Nunosur and U.S. revolutionaries and activists continued late into the night. Nunosur will be organizing future discussion forums to continue this important exchange.

Greenspan attended the gathering as an invited representative of Workers World Party.

Frantz Fanon and today’s struggles

Continued from page 5

strophic reactions, and will oblige it to send out frenzied appeals for help to the former mother country.”

This is the crisis of leadership, organization and ideology facing the peoples of the Third World. At the mass base this phenomena of political marginality is manifested in the socio-psychological alienation of the popular classes. It is among this section of the overwhelming majority of the people that Fanon places his hopes for revolutionary transformation.

In Fanon’s estimate the only salvation for the national bourgeoisie in the Third World is to abandon its own ostensible class interests and move to integrate completely with the mass struggles aimed at the abolition of the colonial legacy. This failure to assimilate Western values by the popular classes of workers and peasants has created mental disorders peculiar to the colonized masses, which Fanon has written on extensively.

Beyond alienation to self-emancipation

By transcending the subjective state that the colonial powers had placed on the oppressed, this became the focal point in arousing mass consciousness for social transformation. According to Renate Zahar, “In the same measure as the individual’s contact with the colonial power and its institutions grow closer, he [and she] increasingly undergoes processes of alienation. He [and she] becomes more and more uncertain with regard to the conduct he [and she] should adopt. His

[and her] potential of revolutionary resistance decreases proportionately, since his [and her] acceptance of the colonialist ideology prevents him [and her] from realizing the causes of alienation.” (Zahar, Frantz Fanon: Colonialism & Alienation, Monthly Review, 1974)

In order for the process of liberation to begin, there must be an understanding by the oppressed that their existence can no longer remain static and that the possibility of change, although its consequences can be quite violent, is a much brighter prospect than remaining in the oppressed state.

This is the attitude that permeates the masses in the early stages of revolt. It is the underlying basis of the level of consciousness rising among those who are engaged in broad ranging industrial action or armed revolutionary struggle.

Even after the attainment of national independence, the potential for perpetual rebellion still exists if the governing regime has not moved to re-correct the exploitative conditions which were characteristic of colonial society.

Fanon states that the decolonization process is inherently violent: “It transforms spectators crushed with their inessentiality into privileged actors, with the grandiose glare of history’s floodlights upon them. It brings a natural rhythm into existence, introduced by new men [and women], and with it a new language and a new humanity.” (“The Wretched of the Earth”)

Therefore, the socio-psychological

alienation of the oppressed masses can only be effectively treated and cured within the context of the revolutionary national liberation movement for the creation of a genuinely equal and democratic society.

Fanon’s lasting legacy

Many people may be tempted to make the argument that Fanon’s theory of the redemptive nature of revolutionary violence by the oppressed against colonial and neocolonial domination would not be applicable in analyzing the current struggles raging throughout North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. Yet despite the contradictions which have arisen within the post-colonial states and societies over the last five decades, there is still a continuing desire among the workers and the oppressed for genuine emancipation, unity and socialism.

The ideas of Frantz Fanon played an instrumental role in revolutionizing the U.S. Civil Rights and Black Power movements of the 1960s. The Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee studied Fanon, and his influence was also profound within the Black Panther Party.

James Forman of SNCC wrote in his political biography, “There was no real division between the sugar cane fields of Martinique and the cotton fields of the American South, between the French racists and the American ones, between the mental colonization that Fanon fought and the psychological oppression of young black Sammy Younge,” a civil rights student activist killed in Alabama in January 1966.

(“The Making of Black Revolutionaries”)

Although it is not clear which direction the unfolding movements in the Arab world will take, it is obvious that the impact of this crisis for U.S. imperialism can potentially change the political character of the North African and Arabian Peninsula regions. Such a loss of influence within the region could fuel the working-class and national struggles inside the confines of the U.S., where the exploitation and oppression of the people has intensified with the advent of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

There are various political and social currents involved in this historical conjuncture: the struggle for Palestinian self-determination and nationhood; the necessity for a democratic revolution throughout the feudal monarchies of the area, particularly within the Gulf States; and the rising tide of Islamic and left tendencies on the front lines against imperialism.

None of these struggles in the North Africa and Arabian Peninsula regions can reach fruition without a fundamental challenge to transform the leading imperialist country, the U.S.

Fanon’s significance for this current situation as well as the relevance of other African revolutionary thinkers and practitioners of the modern period, is that these developments provide the working class and the oppressed with profound lessons and guides to action aimed at self-emancipation and the construction of truly revolutionary societies. □

Día de acción exige que acaben ataques contra la educación

Por Ben Carroll
Raleigh, Carolina del Norte

Jóvenes de todas partes del estado se enfrentaron a la Asamblea General de Carolina del Norte cuando convocaron su primera sesión el 26 de enero. Los/as jóvenes exigían ¡“La educación es un derecho, no un privilegio”!

El “Día de acción para defender la educación” fue organizado por una coalición de grupos dirigidos por jóvenes que están involucrados/as en la lucha por la educación alrededor del estado, desde la lucha contra los recortes presupuestarios y subidas de las matrículas, hasta la lucha por ganar el acceso total a la educación universitaria para estudiantes no documentados/as y cambiar la creciente ola de re segregación en los sistemas de educación pública del estado.

A pesar del tiempo frío y lluvioso, casi 100 jóvenes, incluyendo muchos/as estudiantes de la secundaria y jóvenes inmigrantes, asistieron a la convocatoria que empezó en la mañana con una rueda de prensa y luego cabildeando, seguido por una marcha y manifestación en la tarde.

La enérgica marcha por el centro de Raleigh llenaba la atmósfera con consignas como ¡“No recortes, no cuotas, la educación debe ser gratis”! y ¡“Educación sí, deportación no”! mientras se dirigía a tres lugares: la mansión del gobernador, el Departamento de Instrucción Pública y las oficinas de las universidades comu-

nitarias de Carolina del Norte. En cada parada los/as oradores/as trataban de conectar estas luchas sobre educación con la necesidad de que los/as jóvenes del estado luchen para detener la serie de recortes y leyes reaccionarias propuestas por la nueva legislatura dirigida por republicanos.

Monse Álvarez de NC HEAT (Héroes Emergiendo Entre los/as Jóvenes, por las siglas en inglés) enfatizó: “Este día de acción fue importante porque nosotros/as no podemos simplemente dejar que esta legislatura nueva comience sin hacerles sentir nuestra protesta ... Ellos quieren que volvamos a la era de segregación de Jim Crow donde inmigrantes y gente de color son tratados/as como si fuéramos menos que seres humanos. Quieren empujar su agenda con sus leyes anti-inmigrante, anti-trabajador/a, anti-educación, en contra de todo lo que necesitamos los/as trabajadores/as, a menos que hagamos algo para defendernos.

La educación en la tabla de picar

Como muchos gobiernos estatales en el país que están enfrentando déficits en sus presupuestos, los políticos han recortado cada servicio público para cubrir el déficit de casi \$4 mil millones en el estado. La mayoría republicana, que recientemente ganó ambas cámaras de la legislatura por primera vez en 112 años, ha prometido controlar este déficit solamente con recortes presupuestarios. Miles de traba-



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jadores/as estatales podrían perder sus empleos. El sistema universitario está enfrentando un recorte del 15 por ciento al perder los sistemas de educación pública del estado recortes de casi \$100 millones. Programas enteros de salud enfrentan eliminación, y cada beneficio social está bajo ataque.

El Partido Republicano no perdió tiempo en proponer leyes reaccionarias. En el segundo día de su sesión presentaron una ley anti-inmigrante que usa la ley SB 1070 de Arizona como modelo, una ley que prohibiría que estudiantes no documentados/as asistan a colegios comunitarios y universidades estatales (HB11), una ley que requiere a los/as votantes mostrar sus carnets de identidad, y otras disposiciones más.

“Hicimos que escucharan nuestras voces ese día, y fue importante estar allí y hablar sobre problemas en nuestras comunidades tales como la educación. Ellos tenían miedo de que estuviéramos allí. Mandaron a

la policía para tratar de detenernos. Desafortunadamente, presentaron la HB11 el próximo día, pero esto fue solamente el comienzo, y vamos a seguir luchando sobre estos asuntos”, dijo Raúl Arce de Raleigh FIST (Luchemos contra el Imperialismo, Unámonos).

Grupos por todo el estado están movilizándose para luchar contra los recortes masivos propuestos por la legislatura y

para impedir los crecientes ataques racistas contra la comunidad inmigrante. Los/as activistas planean muchas acciones y manifestaciones diversas en las semanas venideras.

Trabajadores/as y estudiantes alrededor del mundo — de Egipto a Túnez, de Yemen a Jordania, de Gran Bretaña a Puerto Rico — están mostrando el único camino para salir de esta crisis, que es tomar su destino en sus propias manos y luchar. La acción continua y deliberada es exactamente lo que se necesita para acabar con los ataques contra la educación y el sector público y para detener las fuerzas reaccionarias que han surgido en este período.

Con un Mes de Acciones para Defender la Educación Pública nacional proyectado para marzo, los/as jóvenes y estudiantes solamente pueden esperar ver más acciones de esta clase por todo el país.

El escritor es un activista con Raleigh FIST.

Que vivan los héroes de la Plaza de la Liberación

Por Fred Goldstein

4 de febrero — La batalla en la masiva plaza central del Cairo para derrocar al dictador y títere de EEUU Hosni Mubarak, pasará a la historia como un momento crucial, cualquiera que sea su resultado.

Las masas en la Plaza Tahrir (Liberación) — ahora conocida entre los combatientes como Plaza de los Mártires — dieron a los matones contrarrevolucionarios de un régimen moribundo un golpe tras otro, deteniéndoles y manteniendo así el control de la plaza, logrando de este modo una victoria militar y política. Estaban conscientes plenamente de la importancia política crucial de mantener la plaza para el pueblo. Esta fue una victoria para las masas del pueblo egipcio, el pueblo del Oriente Medio en su conjunto, y para los/as trabajadores/as y oprimidos/as del mundo.

El régimen de Mubarak hizo un intento brutal por revertir el gran impulso de la insurrección después de que millones de personas salieran a participar en la “marcha del millón” alrededor del país el martes pasado. Lo que pretendía ser la manifestación más grande en la historia del Cairo se hizo realidad en la Plaza Tahrir.

Clave para el desesperado intento del régimen de Mubarak de recuperar su posición, era el poder echar a los/as manifestantes por la fuerza y la violencia y tomar la plaza para la contrarrevolución. Además de tener como objetivo el simbolismo político de retomar la plaza en manos de las fuerzas populares en contra del

gobierno, el objetivo era sembrar el terror y el miedo entre la población.

Gracias a los miles de defensores que arriesgaron su vida y su integridad física durante dos días, el régimen fracasó en ambos casos. La defensa de la plaza el miércoles y el jueves, 2 y 3 de febrero, condujo a la enorme manifestación del viernes, “Día de la Salida”, y permitió que la lucha recuperara su impulso.

Sin lugar a dudas, la Casa Blanca, el Pentágono, el Departamento de Estado y Wall Street vieron la heroica defensa en los alrededores de la plaza con gran aprensión al ver derrotados a los matones de Mubarak. Esto debe haber acelerado los esfuerzos de la clase dominante imperialista de presionar a Mubarak para que se retire.

La defensa de la plaza fue un glorioso ejemplo de rápida auto-organización del pueblo. Miles de manifestantes se comprometieron a permanecer en la plaza hasta que Mubarak y su régimen desaparecieran. De repente se vieron enfrentados por miles de policías vestidos de civil, espías y empleados del Ministerio del Interior, miembros del partido oficialista y varios matones a sueldo. Hay 1,5 millones de policías y 3 millones de miembros del partido oficialista.

Esta escoria de la sociedad egipcia fue transportada en autobuses y furgonetas por el régimen a una zona de concentración cerca de la plaza. A las 2:15 pm se les dio la señal de ataque. Los militares, que al principio les detuvo, les dejaron entrar arrasando. Armados con tubos, cadenas, mangueras de goma, cuchillos, palos con clavos, y armas de fuego y lanzando

piedras y cócteles molotov, se lanzaron contra los manifestantes desarmados.

En poco tiempo, los manifestantes levantaron barricadas de defensa con láminas de metal, vallas de hierro, autos volcados, tablas y cualquier cosa que pudiera servir como un escudo y una barrera. Se organizaron grupos para defender diferentes puntos y crearon puestos de control alrededor de las vías que conducían a la plaza.

Picaron las aceras para tener piedras para lanzar. Se trajeron botellas de todas partes para hacer cócteles molotov. Un productor de Al Jazeera no identificado que estaba en la escena informó desde un puesto de control en la plaza: “Se amontonaron piedras alrededor de las calles y había botellas de cóctel molotov juntas, una al lado de otra cerca de un árbol — un arsenal revolucionario”. Se trajeron y distribuyeron alimentos y otros suministros. Un tamborileo constante mantuvo la moral.

El periodista habló con Hossan Eid al-Sharqawy, el líder en el puesto de control. “Hosni Mubarak, mata a su propio pueblo”, dijo. “Si muero esta noche, Ud. contará mi historia”.

Eso explica cómo el estado de ánimo y las consignas cambiaron en la plaza, de “Vamos a permanecer en la plaza” a “Vamos a morir en la plaza”.

Al arriesgar la batalla, se aumentaron las víctimas en ambos lados. Cientos de manifestantes recibieron heridas en la cabeza, puñaladas y fracturas óseas. Muchos sufrieron heridas por arma de fuego. Antes del amanecer del jueves, los matones del gobierno abrieron fuego. Se

reportó que el número de muertes en la plaza era de 10 a 15, pero probablemente fue mucho mayor.

Se improvisaron hospitales de campaña en los callejones. Una mezquita fue convertida en hospital. Muchos voluntarios médicos llegaron a la plaza para ayudar a los heridos mientras los manifestantes les asistían. “Mubarak les dijo que nos matarían”, dijo Osama Hilal, un médico que trataba a los heridos en un centro improvisado de clasificación de heridas. “Él cree que tendrá éxito en hacer que todas las personas salgan de la plaza. Pero no vamos a salir”. (Washington Post, 2 de febrero)

Los defensores capturaron 350 fuerzas contrarrevolucionarias. La oficina de una agencia de viajes se transformó en un centro de detención para los matones capturados. Fueron esposados con tiras de plástico. Se confiscaron tarjetas de identificación de la policía y del Ministerio del Interior, así como tarjetas del Partido Nacional Democrático, las cuales fueron mostradas a la prensa. Luego se las entregaron al ejército.

La valentía, la determinación, la creatividad y el ingenio de las masas desarmadas organizándose militarmente espontáneamente para hacer retroceder este vicioso ataque por sorpresa, muestra el potencial que existe para esfuerzos de masa mayores y más amplios. Estos serán necesarios para sacar al gobierno actual, que está respaldado por el imperialismo estadounidense y todas las potencias imperialistas que quieren llevar las riendas de la sociedad egipcia, por las buenas o por las malas. □